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The Weary Country.

A citizen of Massachusetts, Lincoln C. Cummings, early this month wrote a letter to the New York Tribune in which he told what he thought was the matter with the country, and it is become more and more apparent that something is the matter.

Mr. Cummings sized it up as follows:

This country needs a rest from new and drastic laws, of bold and untried schemes, and instead an era of obedience to the law as written or the repeal of impossible statutes. It is apparent that the country is law sick, and as an antidote law, and many of them, are disregarded and evaded. Evasion of any law breeds contempt for all law, and this condition promises progress backward and spells chaos.

This country needs to exercise itself in repeal instead of increase, in enforcement of present laws instead of wholesale manufacture of new ones, that the good red corpuscles of common prosperity shall circulate in the body politic.

The Washington Herald, a sufficiently progressive newspaper, agrees with Mr. Cummings' diagnosis and says:

There is same philosophy in this statement. It is a conservative view without involving reactionary conservatism.

The country is indeed in danger of becoming "law sick" if it is not so already.

None can gainsay the truth, that "evasion of any law breeds contempt for all law."

Not only the country, but every community of it, is suffering more or less from too much law, and will suffer more, if the idea grows that all the ill mankind is heir to are to be cured by legislation.

The raising of public sentiment during the Roosevelt regime to the appreciation of evils in our political and economic life was wholesome and helpful.

The country needed it, and it made and is making yet for a better state of things.

But Mr. Cummings undoubtedly strikes the keynote when he says that the present paramount national need is not more law, and new and untried schemes of legislation, but respect for and obedience to the righteous laws we have, and the repeal of impossible statutes "whose evasion breeds contempt for all law."

One may quite agree with him and still be progressive and optimistic.

Popular Law Making.

The Providence Journal, the foremost of the Eastern "progressive," not to say "insurgent," newspapers, thus deals with the subject of direct legislation, leaving to the reader the business of drawing his own conclusions: "Arkansas joins the states which employ the general initiative and referendum, according to the returns of the voting Monday, on an amendment to the constitution in behalf of which Colonel Bryan has been conspicuously stumping the state. Seven states have heretofore implanted the system of popular law making in their constitutions—Maine, Montana, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota and Utah, the first-named having been the last to amend its constitution, copying the Oregon law with vital modifications. By the Oregon provision 'the people reserve to themselves power to propose laws and amendments to the constitution and to enact or reject the same at the polls independent of the legislative assembly.' In Maine, however, a bill springing by petition from the electorate goes to the legislature for its consideration. If enacted without change, that concludes the operation. If amendments are made, or a competing measure is promulgated, then a referendum is called to settle the difference. Furthermore, the electors of Maine may not initiate amendments to the constitution. The process is calculated to overcome manifest objections to the Oregon plan. Under the latter, complaint has been made that the laws adopted are 'full of bad spelling, bad punctuation, omissions and repeated words,' while in one instance, an important amendment to the constitution, adopted as shown by the votes, by some hocus pocus was omitted from the code as published a year later.

It appears to be not difficult to gain popular support for the initiative and referendum, provided that a legislature can be induced to submit the plan to the voters. At the same time, experience where it is most favored has already shown the expediency of

putting restraints upon its exercise. The system, as illustrated without limitation in Oregon, does not commend itself to all those who believe in "reserving to the people" some part of the power that, at its origin, was sovereign in the legislature. Even in Oklahoma the statute which puts the constitutional system into effect requires the safeguarding procedure exemplified in the Maine system. Generally speaking, however the evidence is that the principle of representative government, as recognized until recently in all the constitutions, will not be regarded as sacrosanct when the temptation is offered to supplant it with the device of direct legislation. Nor will an argument based on the embarrassing experiences of Oregon necessarily have force to sustain the old order. The old order, nevertheless, has manifest advantages, and the appeal to well tested principle is sound. Direct legislation, indeed, is an old order. The modern device is really a recurrence to primeval principles which the invention of representative government supplanted a thousand years ago—a peculiar contribution to political science for which the English race has enjoyed much credit.

It is too early to declare the fruits, be they valuable or mischievous, of this example of political activism. Yet, as one constitutional authority expresses it, "it is difficult to see why the objections of a thousand years ago do not apply today"; while it is perfectly clear that in complete operation the system would reduce the functions of the legislature to naught.

The Lancet, the well known English medical journal, indorses the claim that the sting of the bee will cure rheumatism. The treatment recommended calls for six stings for the first three applications, with a gradual increase afterward up to two dozen. It is a heroic remedy. Some people would consider rheumatism a mere trifle compared with twenty-four bee stings.

It is not probable that the two indicted Chicago pork packers who are sojourning in Europe will be so anxious to return home that they will pay a premium for berths in the steerage.

Current Comment

ARBITRATING THE STYLES.

The hope may be expressed that the founding in Chicago of a college where the mysteries attending the creation and building of woman's headgear is to be taught is the first definite step in an international movement for greater unity of style. Conditions now are not what they should be. The average American woman is constantly possessed of the fear that the hat purchased at the milliner's and recommended to be the very latest French creation, is already passe or provincial in the fashionable centers of the old world.

Why, it is asked, can not millinery be made an exact science? The yearnings of the feminine heart are the same in America as in Europe. True aestheticism, if there is such a thing, must conform to a universal standard. If women's hats, bonnets and toques, in shape, size and color, are built upon lines of good taste and the accepted standard of beauty, then those of each particular and peculiar class should look as much alike as the peas in a pod. Do you suppose for a moment that the automobile makers in France are a year or two years behind those in America, or vice versa? Perish the thought. Then why, forsooth, should the makers for feminine finery and furbelows in the great American fashion centers be plodding along twelve or eighteen months behind the Paris designer? It is only because we of America, men and women alike, have not yet become brave enough to hope that perhaps our conceptions of what is really the proper thing in millinery are as likely to be correct as are those of the French.

And so it seems encouraging that an American school of millinery is to be established. This school will lend prestige, if nothing else, to American ideas. The next step, it would seem, will naturally be the submission of disputes to an international court of arbitration. Of course it is not reasonable to expect that American creations will be awarded all the prizes. Neither will the styles set by Paris modistes rule the world, as now. But possibly out of it may come an order abolishing some of the outrageous abuses which hatmakers somewhere, have inflicted on a patient and long-suffering humanity—Woman's National Daily.

DOMESTIC SERVICE.

Just as Europe is raising its voice in lament over the disappearance of the old family servant, she turns up in this country, of all places in the world. A few weeks ago a contented and happy old retainer received a semi-public recognition of her virtues in this city, and now another instance of practically life-long service with one family is reported. It is probable that these are not sporadic cases; on the contrary, many more of them are now likely to come to light.

Each of these two cases proves anew that the old ways are best. Like mistress, like maid. The prolonged relation was made possible in each instance, according to the testimony, by mutual respect and liking, consideration and loyalty, by reasons utterly old-fashioned, unsociological and uneconomic according to the students of an increasingly serious problem of domestic life.

A discreet question as to the reasons why such eminently capable and home-keeping women did not choose to become partners in the keeping of homes of their own has already been asked by others. What would interest us more is an inquiry into neighborhood ethics. Were there no domestic servant snatches around in the place where these two admirable women ministered to the comfort and happiness of their employers? Not all housekeepers are morally strong enough to refrain, in the midst of sore domestic troubles, from coveting and tempting the jewel in another's kitchen, across the court of an apartment house or the gardens

of a suburban settlement. What tales these two could probably tell of temptation, inducement and lures, what treachery might they reveal lurking behind smiling, neighborly masks, what quarrels might they bring about, what lifelong friendships might they sever! But perhaps one of the secrets of domestic service, as of successful marriage, lies in the wisdom of many reticences. It would be interesting to hear from these two ministering angels of the household on the subject if they could be brought to speak. But that is unlikely. It is generally only the successful servant snatcher who is found out.—New York Tribune.

PACIFIC ISLAND HARBOR.

United States Naval Station at Pago-Pago Has Strong Strategic Position.

Pago-Pago is undoubtedly the finest island harbor in the Pacific, either north or south of the line. Ages ago the bay was undoubtedly a huge crater occupying the center of the island. One day the water must have broken through into the lava, causing an explosion which, in addition to settling the island a thousand feet or more, blew out a big slice of the crater's rim and dropped it out of sight somewhere in the deep sea. The place where the slice blew out is the present entrance to the harbor, and it is wide and deep enough to hold the capitol at Washington without interfering with navigation.

So completely landlocked is the harbor, and so smooth are its waters in all weathers, that from anywhere in the inner bay, except for the tropical vegetation which clothes the mountains, it might pass for a Swiss lake. The high mountain walls cut off the rays of the morning and evening sun, and the velvety green of the wonderful tropic tapestry which covers them, reflecting scarcely any light and heat, makes the harbor several degrees cooler than any other place of similar latitude, either north or south of the equator. At noon on the warmest day of a month spent there the thermometer registered 79 degrees Fahrenheit. The coolest day was 74 degrees at noon and 72 degrees at midnight, while the water held around an even 80 degrees all the time.

The naval reservation, with its dock, coal pile, ice plant and warehouses, occupies the only extensive piece of level land on the bay. Above on a jutting promontory which commands the entrance to the bay and every foot of the harbor line, is the residence of the governor of the island, a position usually filled by the commanding officer of the naval station. At the end of the bay, half submerged in a forest of coconuts, bread fruit, bananas and mangos, is the village of Pago-Pago, the most important native settlement on the island.—Los Angeles Times.



A STRANGE FANCY.

Harriet Hollowneck—That man is just crazy about me.
Polly Pickles—What absurd notions a clouded intellect will conceive!



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